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NOTES AND DISCUSSION.

BERECHIAH NAQDAN.

MR. JACOBS' suggestion that the Berlin Bible (JEWISH QUARTERLY REVIEW, II., p. 331) was written by Berechiah's son, in the year 1233, and not 1333, is strongly confirmed by the day when the copy was finished, mentioned in the colophon as Wednesday, the 21st of Heshwan. This was the case in 1233, and not in 1333 (*Athenæum*, April 19, 1890, No. 3,260). As to the omission of the hundreds in this colophon, which I have not found in any other MS., Mr. Jacobs communicated to me that such is the case in some English *Shetars* (ed. Davis, p. xiii.). I can find it only in one *Shetar*, viz., No. 150, to which probably a Latin document was annexed, with the Christian date. The thousands are wrong anyhow

in the Berlin colophon, where we read אֶלֶף הָרִבְעִי, which ought to be החמישי for 1233, and הששי for 1333. The Vatican colophon offers some difficulties, owing to its being partly obliterated. Assemani, in his Catalogue, No. xiv., wrote as follows:—וְכִימְתִּיחוּ בְיוֹם ג' ב' חֹדֶשׁ אָב שְׁנַת—

נִיט הָאֶלֶף הַחֲמִישִׁי “finished on Tuesday, the 10th of the month of Ab, in the year 59 of the fifth thousand,” i.e., according to Assemani, 5059=1299. In this year, the 10th of Ab, according to Dr. Mahler's tables, fell on Friday, the 10th of July, not to say that for 5059 the thousand is the sixth (הַשִּׁשִּׁי) and not the fifth, as given in the colophon. For 4959=1199, the 10th of Ab fell on a Wednesday, the 6th of July. Professor Guidi and Monsignor Ugolini, who both kindly examined the colophon in question, read as follows:—אָב בַּחֹדֶשׁ נ' כ"א

וְכִימְתִּיחוּ בְיוֹם ג' ב' חֹדֶשׁ אָב שְׁנַת נ"ט לְפָרֶט אֶלֶף הַחֲמִישִׁי ש"ל “finished on Tuesday, the 21st of Ab, the year 99 of the fifth thousand.” In the Vatican MS. the hundreds are also omitted, an omission which seems to be characteristic of our scribe: 99 could only be 4999, for 4099 is too early; in 4999, the 21st of Ab fell on a Sunday, and not on Tuesday, as said in the colophon. Professor Guidi queries the כ, in כ"א and Monsignor Ugolini writes as follows:—“Potrebbe ancora leggersi, ma con minore probabilità ב'” which means the 16th of Ab, which, indeed, fell on Tuesday, the 16th of July. We have seen that Assemani also read ב', but Professor Guidi does not doubt the א in כ"א. On the other hand he queries the נ in the years, viz., in נ"ט, for which Assemani puts נִיט; the doubtful letter could also be an ע, i.e., ע"ט; in the three possible dates, viz., 4959=1199, 4979=1219, and 4999=1239, however, the 21st of July did not fall on a Tuesday. We shall have, therefore, to accept the reading ב"י the 16th of Ab (although usually expressed by ט"ז and the ב being an unnecessary repetition), of the years 1199 (נ"ט) or 1219 (ע"ט), but not of 1239 (צ"ט), for the following reason: Elijah mentions in the Vatican MS. his father's fables, but not his translations of the treatise of Adelhard of Bath, or of the *Lapidarium* mentioned in the Berlin MS.; the copy of the Berlin MS. must consequently be later made than that of the Vatican, i.e., the Vatican MS. must have been copied before 1233. It is curious to state that the ethical treatise (see below, p. 521) is not mentioned at all in either colophon. Mr. Jacobs suggested to us the reading of י"ט for נ"ט, and הששי for החמישי (in

the case of the Berlin MS. we find, indeed, that the thousands are wrong), and believes that the Vatican MS. was copied in the year 5019=1259, and in this year the 21st of Ab, indeed, fell on a Tuesday. This is very ingenious, but according to our opinion scarcely possible. In the first instance the points of abbreviation over ב' or נ' are distinct in the Vatican MS., and could not be mistaken as the head of a ז . Secondly, in 1259, Berechiah must have been over hundred years old, as we shall see later on, a fact which would have been mentioned by his son. Finally the Vatican colophon must be earlier than that in the Berlin MS., which is of the year 1233 (see JEWISH QUARTERLY REVIEW, II., p. 323).

Anyhow, Mr. Jacobs was right in saying that Berechiah flourished towards 1180-1190, but we shall oppose the English naturalisation to Berechiah, and we do not believe that he knew Arabic to such an extent, if he knew it at all, as to be able to translate from rhymed prose. He translated from Latin or from French, but not from Arabic; and his fables, which we shall find adapted from some current texts soon after 1190, he composed in Provence or Normandy, but scarcely in England (see below p. 523).

Before we give the arguments for our statements, we shall discuss the probable date of Berechiah. His notes on Saadiah, which precede in the Parma MS. the ethical treatise he wrote not earlier than 1161, and not later than 1170, for he quotes in it a passage of Solomon Pirhon's Dictionary, which was composed in 1161, and according to the Parma MS. Berechiah dedicated it to R. Meshullam הנריב; who is very probably identical with Meshullam ben Jacob of Lunel, to whom Judah ibn Thabbon dedicated his translation of the first part of Bahya (or Behai's) treatise, entitled *Hobath hal-Lebaboth*, out of which Berechiah quotes four passages (Zunz in Geiger's *Jüdische Zeitschrift*, p. 9). Berechiah says as follows, according to a kind communication

of Dr. L. Modona, of the Parma Library: הזכרתי בתחלת הספר אלה הדברים • והנהו מנחה שלוחה לאדוני הנריב ר' משלם נר עולם אשר לבש

צדק כמדו • והוא ידיני לכף זכות [חסדון]: There is no adequate reason to doubt that this Meshullam was an Italian *Nadib* (Steinschneider, *Hebrew Bibliography*, III., p. 44), when we know for certain that the Provençal Meshullam was indeed a Mæcenas for translations of ethico-philosophical literature. He died in the year 1170. Thus we find Berechiah in communication with the Provence not later than 1170, at the age of twenty years, or little above. He calls himself *Naqdan*—a title which he would scarcely apply to himself at an earlier age than twenty. Accordingly Berechiah would have been in the year 1233 aged eighty-three, and Elijah calls himself rightly, "son of his father's old age" (JEWISH QUARTERLY REVIEW, II., p. 323). That Berechiah was of a French-speaking country cannot be doubted from his translation of the *Lapidarium*, if we should even admit, with Dr. Steinschneider, that the French words which we find in his translation of Adelhard were substituted by a scribe for the Latin words of the original. It is more probable that Berechiah himself introduced the French words instead of the Latin ones, if, indeed, he did not translate from a French version of Adelhard, which has not yet been discovered, for the benefit of his French co-religionists who did not know Latin. From extracts given by Dr. Zunz of the Parma MS., and which we shall, for convenience sake, reproduce in a fuller form, we find that Berechiah mentions there that he had already translated Christian treatises from the Latin. This, consequently, he did when very young, and, perhaps at Dreux, where we find his son in 1233. Berechiah, perhaps, visited Provence since the

reputation of R. Meshullam might have reached Normandy by Abraham Ibn Ezra, who made a long stay at Dreux before visiting England (*Revue des Etudes Juives*, xviii., p. 303), and the ardent youth wished to enter the school of Lunel. How long he remained in Provence, and whether he also made a stay at Narbonne, where the Kambis (Kimhis) had established the home of grammatical and exegetical studies, we are not sure. What we may say positively is, that Berechiah was certainly not idle during twenty years or more after the composition of his ethical treatise. Most likely he wrote biblical commentaries, which are now lost, unless the MS. 28 of the University Library contains his commentary on Job (JEWISH QUARTERLY REVIEW, II., p. 326), and also grammatical and masoretic treatises, from which we have scanty quotations.

The following passages of the introduction which precede his fables will clearly show that he composed his book on the model of Latin or French fables, to which he added perhaps, some from the *Calilah v' Dinnah*, after a great massacre in England. He does not say that he translated, as he does elsewhere; but he means to be original. We quote from the MSS. 1421 and 1466 of the Bodleian Library. (See the New Catalogue, coll. 506 and 520.) He says as follows:—

נאום ר' ברכיה ב"ר נטרונאי הנקדן • אשר משלים אלו הצמחין והלדיון
איככה אוכל וראיתי באבדן • אם לא אכתבם בספר לזכרון ¹ בעמלי מה יתרון •
ואם ² אחשב ³ עניו או יהיר • לשוני עם סופר מהיר • מי יתן איפה ⁴ ויכתבון
מילי • וסבת עם מכתב משלי • על אופן גלגל העולם ⁵ • אשר מעיני שכלי
נעלם • המתגלגל באי ⁶ הים • אלה המית ואלו חיים :

¹ No. 1421, זכרון. ² 1421, אם. ³ 1466, אחשוב. ⁴ 1466, omits.

⁵ 1421, בעולם. ⁶ 1421 and ed. princeps, באי.

"Says Berechiah, son of Natronai the punctator, who made these fables bud and bring forth, How can I endure to see the destruction of them, if I do not write them in a book for a memorial? In my labour what will be the profit? Whether I think to be humble or proud, my tongue is the pen of a ready writer. Oh, that my words were now written! The occasion of writing my fables is the turning wheels (the fate) of the world, which is hidden from the eyes of my intelligence, (the wheel) which turns in the island of the sea (England), for the one to die and the other to live."

And towards the end he says in verse as follows:—

ועמר ² בון ומשפחה שפלה	באי הים ¹ עדת שכל שכולה
לכל שואל ולנותן מהולה	ואזן רוב עשירה ³ ערילה
שלול בגד ישר דרך ושמלה	וחפשו ⁴ בוגדי בגד עלילה
ותוך מחנה ישרים קול יללה ⁵	עדת חנף שמחה היא וצהלה
והדובר ⁶ נכוחות לקללה	ואשרו פה אשר דובר נבלה
המתוק ⁸ מר ואורה ⁹ באפילה	ורע כטוב ⁷ וכלה כבתולה
וסבותיו קטנה וגדולה	וברכיה זמן קלל ואלה
וזולתם ולא עמם בנחלה	וטוב לי פת חרבה ועמילה ¹⁰

¹ 1421, באיים שם. ² 1421, ועצום. the next two lines are omitted.

³ Ed. pr., עשירים. ⁴ Ed. pr., ותפשו. ⁵ Ed. pr., אלה, against the metre.

⁶ 1421, ופה דובר. ⁷ Ed. pr., טוב. ⁸ 1466, כמתוק; ed. pr., ומתוק.

⁹ 1421, ואורם.

¹⁰ 1421, עם עמילה.

It is difficult to translate faithfully the play upon words in these lines of poetry (metre *Hazadj* in Arabic, Hebrew מְגִל; see *M'Lechet ha-Shir*, p. 7). The substance is that the community of the island of the sea (England) is in a corrupt state, not assisting to those who ask to be helped. Berechiah curses the time and the fate, and he prefers to live upon dry bread rather than to be with these people. It seems that Berechiah visited England, like Ibn Ezra, but he was not so well received as the Spanish traveller. And when he reached his home (Normandy?) he wrote the Fables. In England he would not have dared to utter such language against the rich and influential Jews. Could he then be identical with Benedictus the punctator in the Charter of 1195? We cannot believe it. Berechiah evidently refers to the massacre of 1190 at the coronation of Richard I, and he would naturally not have written his words later than a year or two after the sad event. The words, "To make bud and bring forth" (above, page 522), and אֵזֶן וְחֶקֶר (JEWISH QUARTERLY REVIEW, II., p. 322) can scarcely be applied to a translation, although it might be the case, for the passage which Berechiah quotes from the הִישְׁמַעְאֵל, is from an Arabic author, but it is not likely, for all his other translations are made from Latin or French. This might be concluded from the following passage found in the MS of Munich (Steinschneider in the *Isr. Letterbode*, viii., p. 25).

אני ברכיה בר נטרנאי לחצוני רעיוני • אשנם מותני להעתיק אלה הדברים
בלשון עברית כי מצאתי (so) במכתב של גוים אשר העתיקום מן העבריים
[העבריים 1]. ובם דברים נעלמים ומחכמי (so) דורנו וחוכמות (so) מפוארות
למשכילים לא שזפתם עין סכלים • ובראותי חכמה מפואר (so) בלי (בכלי 1).
מכוּעַר לפניכם מוחזרים (so) ; ופנינים לפני חזירים 1. מיהרתים מיד בן נכר
וכתבם (so) בלשון הקדש אשר נעלה על [כל] לשון :

"I, Berechiah, son of Natronai, urged by my thoughts, will gird my loins to translate these words (the *Quæstiones naturales*) into Hebrew, for I have found in the writings of the nations who translated them from the Arabic, hidden matter and great wisdom, which no eye has perceived : *And when I saw wisdom in an unclean vessel, and pearls before swine* [the whole passage is corrupted ; our rendering is according to Dr. Steinschneider's emendation], *I purified them from the hand of the strangers, and wrote them in Hebrew, a language superior to all other languages.*" The passages in italics we shall find also in another treatise of our author (see below p. 524). The MS. of Parma, De Rossi, No. 482 (now 2106), contains notes on Saadiah Gaon's well known philosophico-theological work on "Creeds and Opinions," which begins with the following words :—מֵעַ וְאֶזְהָרָה וְהֵם מֵעַ—

נאם ברכיה בר נטרנאי בספר צווי ואזהרה והם מֵעַ—, such is the title of the third part of Saadiah's work in the anonymous translation, most likely made before that of Judah ibn Thabbon (Tibbon). We know that translations of Jewish Arabic books existed before Tibbon, such as those of Gebirol, Bahya, or Behai, Abraham ben David, Judah Hayyoodj, Jonah ibn Jannâh, and others, some of which were known not only in Provence, but also in France, and not improbably in Normandy and England. Berechiah quotes other parts of Saadiah's work, viz., עֹד חֶבֶר סֵפֶר וְקִרְאוּ ; מְגִלַּת זְכוֹת • וְחֻבּוֹת וְרָאוּ עַל הַמְשְׁכִּילִים שִׁתְּחַכְמוּ בְּזוֹ הַמְּגִלָּה וְשִׁתְּבוֹנוּ בָּהּ ; הַנְּאוֹן חֶבֶר מְגִלָּה וְכֵנָה אוֹתָהּ כָּאֹר חֶק אִמֶּת הַנֶּפֶשׁ ; this is the fifth part. Towards the end we find the following quotation,

ובענין תחיית המתים כלל הגאון עשר שאלות ואכתבם בקוצר • הא' מי ומי העומדים בתחיה ... שאלה י' הדור אשר תהיה הנאולה בימיהם ואיך יהיה טבם; this is the treatise, attributed to Saadiah, containing ten questions addressed to Saadiah concerning the resurrection, and his answers, but in an abridged form (see *Hebr. Bibl.*, xiii., p. 82, note 2).

In the course of these notes we read as follows: בענין: מחבור הגאון רב סעדיה ועתה אזכיר מדברי הגאון הדיין הגדול רב בחי

ור' שלמה אבן גבירול כתב בענין—Berechiah quotes from Gebirol, saying—ואמר ר'—: and from Abraham ibn Ezra in the following words:

ראש לחכמה ונזר אברהם אבן עזר: The name Ibn Ezer, which the rhyme requires, is also found in Berechiah's translation of Adelhard, as well as in the anonymous translation of the *Image du Monde*, but not in *Sepher hash-Shoham*. Pirhon is also mentioned as follows:—

ור' שלמה אבן פרחון כתב בספרו הנה היוצר ברא שלשה מיני בחיות משונות (חסר. See *rad.* See Zunz in Geiger's *Zeitschrift*, x., p. 9). Dr. Steinschneider (*Hebr. Bibl.*, xiii., p. 83) says that in the Munich MS. a passage of Abraham ben David's הנפש is quoted, and concludes from this that Berechiah could not have lived so early. Abraham, however, died in 1192; why could his book not have been written between 1161 and 1170?

עם מה שלמדתי אני: Finally the following passage occurs in this note: ברכיה מחכמת ספר שהעתקתי מלשון הגוים ללשונינו... כל אלה בינותי מחכמת היוונים אשר העתיקום הגוים ללשוניהם ואני טהרתים מיד בני נכר ושמתים [ם]. These words in a more extended form are to be found in Berechiah's *מס' המצרף*, MS. of Munich. A second part in the Parma MS., which Dr. Steinschneider considers as an extract from the *מס' המצרף*, begins as follows:—

דברי ברכיה אשר בנקדים דור הולך ודור בא • והשכל אשר בלבות נחבא • אם לא יכתב לזכרון • לא יספר לדור אחרון ... על כן חברו הגאונים את ספרי היחוד שיתבוננו בו הקוראים ושישיבו אל לבם שמוש המוסר וחכמת המצפון כחכמת ס' הגאון רבנו סעדיה וס' ר' שלמה אבן גבירול וס' שחבר ר' אברהם אבן עזר ... ואמר הגאון אשר חבר תורת [חובת] הלבבות... ואמר אבן גבירול אם הדברים רעים בענין הנפש ק"ו בענין היוצר ועוד אמר אם נטרח להשיג השמש מצד אורה וניצוציה ורוחק האפל ממנה נעמד על מציאתה ונהנה ממנה ונניע אל ענין המבוקש ממנה ומי שיטרח למצאה מצד ענולה תכהינה עיניו ולא יהנה ממנה. We know that Gebirol's ethical treatise, with the title of *Choice of Pearls*, was commented upon in France. (See Steinschneider's *Catal. libri impr. Bodl.*, coll. 2323.)

In order to exhaust our subject as much as possible, we shall give the following items:—1st, the quotation from the *Book of the Onyx*, which is the following, root חשף—חשפים נקראו חשכים—ור' ברכיה נקד' אומ' שהדלים נקראו חשכים—

2nd, Ahron ben Hayyim (MS. in the Bodl. Libr., New Catal., col. 423), who was a nephew of the martyr Jacob of Corbeil, a contemporary of Jacob ben Meir (R. Tam), quotes an explanation of a word from the mouth of R. Berachiah; if he be identical with our Naqdan, we should have the approximate date of about 1200 for our Berechiah. Other quotations of

The *Thosaphot* to the Pentateuch (British Mus. MS., add. 22092, fol. 129a, and in the מנחת יהודה Harl. 269, fol. 134, for the copy of which we are indebted to Mr. Schechter) have the following quotation on Dent.

As to Moses, son of Isaac, he wrote his *Book of the Onyx* at a matured age (he says in his preface that in his youth he composed another grammatical treatise), certainly not before the year 1161, since he quotes Pirhmon's Dictionary, and not after 1200, since he does not quote David Kamhi at all. Although descended from an English family he did not

we shall have a right to consider Moses of לניטרש in the Berlin MS. identical with Moses of London in the glosses on the Pentateuch. Samuel Naqdan, quoted by Moses, is naturally not the same person as the scribe of the Bible of St. John's College, Cambridge. The following quotations from the *Shoham* (of which we hope Mr. Collins will be enabled soon to give us a complete edition) might perhaps lead to further information concerning its author.

מקדש נפתלי • כי לא יתכן היות השם כמו:— (קדש 76, Fol. 2^o) he says:—
קדש ברנע ובהסמכו בסגול • כמו קדש הקוף בסגול נפתלי כי לא נמצא שם
עיר ושם אדם משתנה בדבקות • גם מצאנו אלון בצעננים אשר את קדש
הקוף בסגול ולא בקמץ על ידי הסלוק • ומן קדש יאמר קדשה הקוף בצר

הטעם עמו • ומן קדש שהוא בקמץ וצרי יאמר ויבאו קדשה • הדת בצרי
והטעם עמו • אלה וראי שתי שמות הן קדש וקדש • כן אמ' מורי שיה' :

והמערה אשר בו • מערת המכפלה • ודומה: קצת—(מערב. Fol. 110, r. 3°).
לפעולה ע"מ אני מצוה אותך • ולולי הריש גם הוא היה ראוי להדגש • והוא
על שמערים ממנו העפר • ולו המם היה עיקר כדברי בעל פרחון • היה אומר
מערת המכפלה ע"מ קערת בסף • ומן תער וישלפה מתערה • כי התיו עיקר •
ומן תעלה שהתו נוספת אומ' תעלת הברכה מפי מורי :

ומאבא מרי שמעתי חשש כמו איש בחלוף איה' הע'—(חשש. Fol. 81, r. 4°).
מן והתאוששו • וכן יסד קלירי ותרשישי חשמל הישי יקר • למד' שהוא לשו
אש • וכן הוא אומ' תהרו חשש תלדו קש' כלום שני דברים יוצאים מכס
שזה מחבר את זה :

If the question about Berechiah and Moses, son of Isaac, may be considered settled, those concerning Moses, son of Yom Tob Tchernigoff, of the two Isaacs, of Russia and Tchernigoff, as well as the Berechiah, the author of the commentary on Job in the MS. No. 28 of the University Library of Cambridge, remains for the present unsolved.

A. NEUBAUER.

I am glad to find that Dr. Neubauer assents to my view of the date of Berachyah Nakdan, and hope that he will one day acknowledge the true faith of his identification with Benedict le Puncteur, of Oxford. The introduction to the Fables which, I should add, does not exist in the edition I used, or indeed in any edition later than the *princeps*, fixes Berachyah in England about the time of the massacres of 1190, and we find Benedictus le Puncteur at Oxford in 1194. Barring a certificate from the hand of Berachyah, I do not see what greater proof of identification could be given. He must have got at least part of his Fables from the Arabic, for there is no evidence of such fables as Nos. 28, 36, 68, existing in Latin or French, so early as 1190. The difficulty about Elijah's colophons is that whichever we fix upon as the first, Berachyah's age was then about eighty, and he is scarcely likely to have written much after that age. Berechiah was therefore not living at the date of one of the colophons whichever be the later. The only thing that seems fixed is the Berlin colophon, which my discovery of the day of the week settles as 1233.

I fail to see how Moses ben Isaac's statement that his mother or himself was "in the island Angleterre" proves that he was *not* there. He not alone quotes R. Moses ben Yomtob, whom we know to have been in London, but likewise R. Menachem of London. However I am quite satisfied with the extent of Dr. Neubauer's conversion, and his careful investigation of all the details about Berachyah has earned him the thanks of all interested in the subject.

JOSEPH JACOBS.

Samuel Masnuth.—Amongst the recent publications of the society *Mekitse Nirdamim* we are glad to find the commentary on Job, called *מעין ננים*, by Samuel ben Nisim Masnuth, edited from a Bodleian MS. by the well known Solomon Buber. The author called his com-